1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
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along the gunwale. These designs soon wear off when the canoe is in use and are not renewed.

The paddles used by the Andamanese vary considerably in size and to some extent in shape, but the following description with its accompanying figure gives a fair idea of a typical specimen. The whole paddle has a length of 123·5 centimetres, the shaft being 85 centimetres and the blade 38·5 centimetres. The diameter of the shaft from the blade to the middle is 2·6 centimetres, and from the middle towards the handle end it tapers to a point. The shaft is circular in section throughout its length. The blade is leaf-shaped, pointed bluntly at the apex. In section it is plano-convex, with a maximum thickness of 1·3 centimetres and a width of 8·7 centimetres. Paddles are cut with an adze from the wood of the *Myristica longifolia* and planed with a boar's tusk. They are often ornamented, when new, with painted designs in red and white.

Fig. 46. Paddle

In deep water the canoe is paddled. Each of the occupants sits facing forward. The steersman sits on the stern platform. The others sit on the seats provided by the outrigger booms. Each man paddles on which side he chooses. It rests with the steersman to maintain the canoe in its proper course. In shallow water the canoe is propelled with a pole. A man stands on the forward platform and poles the canoe, steering as he does so. In a fairly large canoe a man at the stern may also take a pole and, standing up, help to propel the canoe.

All the work connected with the making of canoes and paddles is done by men alone, except the painting, which is usually done by women. It is the men also who make most use of canoes.

The large canoe, that is now made by all the tribes of the Great Andaman Division, is simply a canoe of the same general shape as the Great Andaman outrigger canoe, cut from a larger tree and without the outrigger. The shape of the hull, with its platforms fore and aft, is exactly the same. It seems that when the natives obtained a plentiful supply of iron tools (after 1858) they began to cut down and hollow out larger trees than formerly. Having made these larger canoes they found that they would, when well cut and ballasted with stone, float quite well without an outrigger. (It may be mentioned that the hull of a small canoe is always tested on the water before the outrigger is attached.) Indeed a well cut canoe of large size floats and balances

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

226 receding waves in the rocky hollows on the foreshore, and at the turn of the tide the men are usually to be seen standing up to their waists in water, or poling along the shore in their canoes, and shooting with their bows and arrows at the fish as they dart past.[1]

[824] 40. The seeds of a plant called *tô·rog-*[2] are sometimes crushed and thrown into creeks where fish and prawns are likely to be, as it has the effect of driving the fish from their hiding place, and leads to their easy capture in hand-nets held in position for the purpose.

41. In former times, and even now in the more distant communities, large nets of about 80 feet in length and 15 feet in depth, with meshes of several inches in diameter, were spread at the mouths of creeks for catching turtles and big fish; but since iron has been so easily obtained and canoes and harpoons have become more numerous, the *dryô·to-* usually capture their turtles, &c., by these means in preference to the older method, which entailed much labour in the manufacture. The following is the mode employed when nets are used:—one side is sunk by means of stones, and the other is kept up by floating sticks called *t'â·lag-*, of the *al·aba-*[3] tree (*Melochia velutina*), to each of which a cane-leaf is attached; the ends are then drawn across such parts or creeks into which fish may easily be driven by beating the water with the bamboo shafts of their turtle spears. When any turtle or fish is driven into the net, the exact spot is at once indicated by the disturbance of one of the logs, with its tuft of leaves, whereupon they generally find little difficulty in despatching their captive.

● 502 **Navigation.**—1. It is a subject of surprise to all who, during the past fifteen or twenty years, have come in contact with the Andamanese, and have observed the style and capabilities of their canoes, to read the high encomiums that have been bestowed on the skill with which they are constructed, and to find that they are credited with such extraordinary speed as to distance easily a cutter, as well as a gig, manned respectively by picked crews of blue-jackets and Chinamen,[4] the former of whom "said, in their own usual exaggerated style of remark, they nearly killed

[1] The results obtained by the men are said to be inferior to those obtained by the women and children, but this is probably due to the large quantity of molluscs and crustaceans usually collected in the hand-nets.

[2] A species of *Lagerstræmia*. This is similar to the custom among the Gaboon tribes described by Dr. Brown, who mentions that "at the Gaboon it is the leaves of a pretty leguminous plant, with yellow flowers . . . which is used. So rapid is the poison that if a handful of the bruised leaves are thrown into a pool the fish will almost immediately die and come to the surface."

[3] *Vide ante* "Superstitions," paragraph 7, and *post* "String," paragraph 1.

[4] *Vide* Mouat, pp. 315-321.

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502 themselves in their effort to maintain the credit of their ship, their cutter, and their flag."

502 396 2. Nowhere on Great Andaman, at all events at the present day, have any aborigines been found capable of propelling a canoe at more than half the speed of one of the ordinary gigs in common use at Port Blair; moreover, in respect to the extreme buoyancy of their skiffs, but little κύδος seems due to the Andamanese boat-builder, for having had, until quite lately, no other implement than a rude, though tolerably effective, adze with which to form them, he was compelled to select for his purpose the lightest and softest woods that were procurable. At the same time there is no doubt that if they possessed the requisite knowledge, and the means were available for constructing stronger and more seaworthy craft, they would lose no time in employing them; for they fully recognise the inferiority of their boats, both in regard to workmanship and speed, to those used by Europeans, or by their neighbours the Nicobarese. In one respect only do they consider that their own canoes surpass all others, and that is in the projecting prow, which enables them to spear fish and turtle with more ease than is possible in boats of a different construction.[1]

501 3. The current tradition[2] of the escape of four persons in a boat when the world was submerged, may be fairly considered as affording some evidence that this mode of transit is not regarded as of recent introduction.

4. Many conflicting opinions have been expressed by different writers under this head, and the form of canoe originally manufactured by the Andamanese has been much discussed. They themselves declare that the outrigger (*chă·rigma-*) was adopted immediately after the Deluge, in consequence of the deterioration of a species of *Pandanus* tree, called *mâng-*,[3] of which, prior to that catastrophe, they had been able to make large plain "dug-outs." Until recently[4] the outrigger continued

[1] In the South Kensington Museum there are models of canoes made by the natives of the Andamans and Nicobars, which will give to any interested in the subject a fair idea of their relative merits, as well as of the skill of their respective makers; and it may be added that in the entrance court of the India Museum (South Kensington) a specimen of a fair-sized Andamanese canoe is now to be seen minus its outrigger.

[2] *Vide* "Mythology," paragraph 16.

[3] *Vide* "List of Trees," Appendix L.

[4] The following information was obtained from an Andamanese chief:—"We have used outrigger canoes from time immemorial. It is in recent times that we have commenced making the large plain canoes, and this we were induced to do from the facility with which we have been able to obtain iron. Owing to their large size they do not require outriggers. When the sea is rough we prefer these large dug-outs, and the small outrigger canoes when it is calm; the latter are more easily made, but do not last many months when in constant use, whereas the former will serve for a year or more."

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in use, and is still to be seen in North and Middle Andaman, but the possibility of obtaining unlimited supplies of iron has enabled those living near Port Blair to return once more to the traditional "dug-out" of antediluvian times; it also seems that this description of canoe is gaining in favour among the tribes of Middle Andaman and the Archipelago, though it had not, in 1879, when I visited that part, penetrated as far as North Andaman.

5. As is correctly stated by Dr. Mouat (p. 316) the Andamanese never venture far from the coast: this was conclusively proved by their ignorance of *Barren Island*[1] and *Narcondam*, until taken past them in the settlement steamer.[2]

6. The safety of either the outrigger or "dug-out," and their adaptability for use as lifeboats,[3] is more than doubtful, while the confidence which is reposed in them by their owners may be judged from the fact that they never venture far from land, and when crossing from one island to another do their utmost to lessen the passage through deep water as much as possible by keeping close in shore and coasting along until the narrowest part of the channel is reached.

7. A glance suffices to show the most casual observer that it would be impossible[4] to preserve the equilibrium of these frail barques without their outriggers, which, being attached to three or four pieces of wood passing through the interior of the canoe are, moreover, not easily removable.

8. The advantages possessed by the large plain "dug-outs" over the outriggers are twofold: for in the first place they can breast a fairly rough sea, while the others are fit only for use in perfectly calm weather; and in the second place, while the former can accommodate a party of from fifteen to forty persons

[1] Visible within a short distance of the east coast of the Archipelago.

[2] Since the date of the raids committed by the *jārawa-* (of Little Andaman) upon the Car Nicobarese, of which mention is made (as a tradition) by Mr. G. Hamilton (*vide* "Asiatic Researches," vol. ii, p. 337, published 1801), no distant voyages appear to have been attempted by these savages in canoes.

[3] "They would make most excellent lifeboats, such, we believe, as have never yet been constructed by any of our most experienced boat-builders" (*vide* Mouat, p. 317). The returns of life-boat institutions would, however, be somewhat prejudicially affected by the adoption of this suggestion; for, as the same writer goes on to say (p. 318), "the greatest adepts in rowing, steering, and guiding our ordinary boats, find themselves completely at a loss when they get into a Mincopie canoe. When any of our men recklessly got into them, and attempted to paddle out a little way to sea, they invariably succeeded in capsizing them, receiving a thorough drenching in the water as a suitable punishment for their rash and imperfect seamanship."

[4] It is therefore difficult to understand the following allusion made by Dr. Mouat (p. 317):—"When the Mincopie go to sea in them they attach to some part of the boat an outrigger, in some respects resembling that which the Cingalese fishermen attach to their boats."

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the latter are seldom large enough to carry more than four or five, and usually not more than two adults.

9. The chief excellence of both these descriptions of canoes is that they cannot sink, owing to the nature of the wood of which they are constructed, and when, as not unfrequently happens, they capsize or are filled by a heavy wave, their occupants skilfully contrive, with but little delay, to right them and bale out the water, while clinging to the sides.

10. Most of the canoe-making is carried on during the months of August, September, and October, and the average time and labour expended is that of about eight men for a fortnight in hollowing out a canoe or "dug-out," and forming the much esteemed prow; for this purpose a trunk is selected varying in length from 10 to 30 feet, and when the bark has been removed the exterior of the proposed canoe, with its important prow, is shaped with an adze (*wō·lo-*[1]), afterwards the interior is scooped out with the same implement; fire is not now-a-days employed to expedite this latter process, whatever may have been the custom in past generations,[2] though I may add that there do not appear to be any traditions in support of such a theory.

11. At the bottom and water-level, canoes, though sometimes more, are never less than 1½ to 3 inches thick, and indeed, if this were not the case, it would be impossible for them to stand, even for a few days, the rough treatment to which they are subjected, or to bear the spoils of a successful turtling expedition.

12. Though the result of the builders' labour might, by making every allowance for the rudeness of their tool, be termed "creditable," it seems passing strange that any writer should especially commend the "finish," "perfection," and "elegance" of the work, and maintain that it surpasses that which could be wrought by Chinese carpenters, whose skill in all handicrafts is so well established.

13. The Andamanese anchor consists merely of a heavy stone, or large lump of coral, fastened securely to a stout line of a few fathoms' length. Rafts are quite unknown to them at the present day, and no evidence of their use in bygone years has been discovered.[3]

14. The canoes are propelled along the shore[4] by means of the haft of the harpoon spear (*kowaïa lō·ko dū·tnga-*[5]), or, in

[1] *Vide* Appendix B, item 15.

[2] *Vide* Colebrooke and Journ. Anthrop. Inst., vol. xi, p. 290, Appendix I.

[3] "They use also rafts made of bamboos to transport themselves across their harbours, or from one island to another" (Colebrooke).

[4] Except when the men are engaged in turtling, the women frequently assist in propelling the canoe.

[5] *Vide* Appendix B, item 10.

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•502 deep water, by paddles (*wāl·igma-*[1]), the size of which is not determined by custom, but varies according to the whim of the maker and the size of the piece of wood (generally of the *Myristica longifolia*) at his disposal;[2] all, whether small or large, are used indiscriminately, either with the outriggers or simple "dug-outs;" paddles are never made by women, to whom, however, their ornamentation with *kòi·ob-* and *ká·ngatâ-būj-* is afterwards entrusted.[3]

531 **Ornamentation.**—1. While the Andamanese habitually ornament their various utensils, weapons, &c., they never attempt to show their talent or originality by representing natural objects, or by devising a new pattern, but slavishly adhere to those which custom has prescribed for each article.[4]

2. These designs are executed by means of a *Cyrena* shell, or are painted in *kòi·ob-*, *tâ·la-ōg-*, or *ká·ngatâ-būj-*; occasionally they content themselves with smearing the entire surface of the object with either of the two first-named pigments, but more often a background is thus formed for the better display of further embellishments.

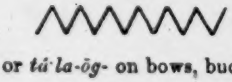
3. These three substances supply their only colours, *i.e.*: brick-red (*kòi·ob-*), white (*tâ·la-ōg-*), and brown (*ká·ngatâ-būj-*).

[301] 4. Small land and sea shells[5] (especially the *Dentalium octogonum*), certain seeds and bones are much prized, not only for making personal ornaments, but also for the adornment of weapons and implements, as well as the human skulls and jawbones which they often wear and carry about with them.

5. It may be added that the details of ornamentation are in most cases subordinate to the general form and outline of the object in question.

6. The following is believed to be a complete list of the designs,[6] both carved and painted, which are in use:—

I. CHEVRONS (*jō·bo-tàrtā·nga-*).



Painted with *kòi·ob-* or *tá·la-ōg-* on bows, buckets, canoes, and paddles.

[1] *Vide* Appendix B, item 11*a*.

[2] Dr. Mouat states (p. 319) that they are made of three sizes, and (p. 320) that "the work of making them is entrusted solely to the women and children," but I have failed in discovering any foundation for these assertions.

[3] The canoes, too, are often similarly ornamented, especially when new.

[4] Of enamelling they possess no knowledge.

[5] Beads, when offered by us, are gladly accepted for use in lieu of small shells.

[6] When it is stated that all these designs are executed by means of pointed sticks, shells, or even the finger-tips, it is scarcely necessary to add that they fall far short of the neatness and mathematical precision characterising most of these illustrations, which therefore can only be taken as representing the particular pattern *attempted*.

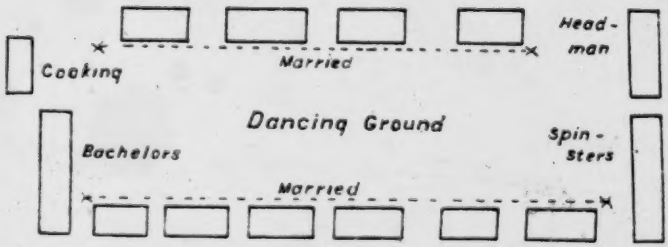
in other savages. At Government House, Calcutta, in 1895, when a party was told to sit down and weep to show the custom at meetings, in a few moments the weeping became genuine, and when after a short time they were told to stop and get up, tears were streaming down their faces. 576

General Capacities.—The Andamanese are good climbers, and rapid walkers and runners, moving with a free and independent gait, and can travel considerable distances at a time. The Jarawas turn their toes in, due to the necessity of stooping to pass along their paths through the tangled jungle. The Eremtaga are good but not remarkable trackers. The Aryoto are good swimmers and are much at home in the water. The Andamanese generally show a dexterity in getting about their thick and tangled jungles which baffles all immigrants, though in this respect the Eremtaga quite out-distance the Aryoto, and the Jarawas apparently all the others. In the jungles all shooting with arrows is necessarily at very short distance, and generally the Andamanese are good shots at short distances only, judging direction very well but distance hardly at all. They can however at the very short distance required for shooting fish allow accurately for refraction in moving water and will shoot their fish successfully even in the surf in a manner that is inimitable: this is really due to accurate judgment of direction. 481

The Andamanese are unadventurous seamen, poling and paddling their canoes with small spade paddles at considerable speed, faster than that of an ordinary ship's boat for a little distance though they could not paddle away from one in even a short chase, but they never go out of sight of land, have never been even to the Cocos (30 miles), nor to Narcondam and Barren Island, nor had they ever any knowledge of the existence of the Nicobars till our arrival. Man has a legend from Car Nicobar doubtfully going to show that the Onges from the Little Andaman once made raids on that island: but if this were true they would do so still. 502

IV. Habits and Customs.

Dwellings.—Except in the Little Andaman and among the Jarawas there are no fixed habitations, the search for easily obtained food and insanitary habits obliging the people to be nomads, for they have no practice of cultivation and domesticate no animal whatever except dogs obtained from the English. They thus dwell in various customary encampments, situate within their respective territories. At these encampments, usually fixed in sheltered spots, they erect about 14 temporary huts capable of holding up to 50 to 80 persons, arranged facing inwards on an oval plan always more or less irregular, thus— 621 [242] [231]



The central space is the dancing ground. A hut is merely a thatch about 4 feet long by 3 feet wide, sloping from 8 inches behind to 4½ feet in front, placed on four uprights and some cross-pieces without walls. In unsheltered spots and at the Head-Quarters of Septs large circular huts are built with a good deal of ingenuity, having eaves nearly touching the ground. These will be as much as 15 feet high and 30 feet in diameter. For hunting purposes mere thatched shelters are erected for protection from the wind. Close to every hut is a very small platform for surplus food about 18 inches from the ground, and in it at least one fire is carefully preserved. This is the one thing that the Andamanese are really careful about for they do not know how to make fire, though 342 [351] 372